

## **ESCAMBIA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES ESCAMBIA COUNTY TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

The Escambia County Public Schools Foundation, in partnership with the Escambia County School District, is proud to announce that Mrs. Carla Ross is the 2019 Teacher of the Year for Escambia County. Mrs. Ross is a 35-year veteran of Escambia County Schools and teaches 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Marketing and Entrepreneurship Academy at Booker T. Washington High School. The Foundation announced the winner at the district-wide "Teacher of the Year" celebration on Jan. 26 at the Golden Apple Awards held at New World Landing with co-presenting sponsors Sandy Sansing and Wendy's

Escambia County Schools Superintendent Malcolm Thomas said, "The most significant thing a teacher could ever hope for is to make a difference in the lives of your students and our teacher of the year, Mrs. Carla Ross, has made a difference in the lives of thousands of her students. She has literally changed students' lives. I have met many of them myself. She is an incredible representative for all of the great teachers in our school district."

While Ross would proudly tell you of the many achievements her students have made as members of DECA over the years at the state, district and international level, they would tell you with pride that In 2016 Ross received the Dare to Achieve Award from Florida DECA. This award is presented by the Florida DECA Board of Advisors to a board member who has, over the years, accepted challenges and dared to inspire the very best in the people they have served. (Learn more about this award at <http://www.fldeca.org/eagles-dare-to-achieve-award.html>)

After the announcement at the Golden Apple dinner, Ross took a few minutes to share some of her perspective with those in attendance and to encourage everyone to work together to stamp out apathy.

"Apathy is not an alternative, it is not an option," she stated with conviction.

"When kids are cutting up and I see a colleague on their phone or their laptop, trying to ignore the problem, I say, Hey! I'm here to help you, let's do this thing," Ross explained. She explained that "this thing" is working together to teach our students correct behavior, and that is not in a textbook and it is not something just taught in your classroom.

"Whether it's at a basketball game, in a grocery store or a parking lot, I have found that we can flex our authority and speak up, with our head up, shoulders back, and teach them," Ross told the packed room.

"They need to know that they cannot be successful cutting up and using profanity," Ross added as she challenged everyone to remember to also model the behaviors we want from them. "Let's bring this fight together, and it is a fight for the next generation and the next."

"Stick around long enough and you get to see the fruits of your labor." Ross concluded. "From elementary school to high school, we make a difference, so stay in the fight, and as my husband says, go in there and have a great day."

Mrs. Ross is married to another career educator in Escambia County. Her husband is Norm Ross who currently serves as the Deputy Superintendent and who is still affectionately known as Coach Ross by many people in Escambia County.

At Washington High, Carla Ross launched the first student-run credit union at her school, a branch of Pen Air Federal Credit Union. In addition, she and her students built the nationally recognized "Cat Shack," a student run school spirit store and snack bar that offers alternative food choices for students at the school. In addition, she is the Marketing Association for Students Sponsor at her School.

It is a tremendous honor to be chosen from over 3,000 teachers in Escambia County. Mrs. Ross was nominated by her peers at Booker T. Washington High, and chosen as the district Teacher of the Year from

over 60 applicants. The selection committee narrowed the candidates to the top ten, all of whom were interviewed to narrow to the top five candidates. The top five all were observed in the classroom and voted on by the selection committee.

The annual Golden Apple dinner was also a chance to celebrate every ECSD school's Teacher of the Year. Each one received a Golden Apple engraved with their name before everyone watched a video produced by WSRE about each of the top five finalists: Carla Ross, Suzanne Hollingsworth from Beulah Elementary, Shana Brown from Molino Park Elementary, Megan Carroll from Northview High School, and William Broome from Woodham Middle School. (The videos will be added in a few days to the Escambia County School District's YouTube channel accessible from the District homepage, or go to [www.youtube.com/c/ECSDFlorida](http://www.youtube.com/c/ECSDFlorida).)

The Foundation's logo is attached along with a photo of Mrs. Carla Ross, ECSD Teacher of the Year. More photos are available in an album posted on the Facebook page, Escambia Schools Public Relations.

#### **About the Escambia County Public Schools Foundation**

Escambia County Public Schools Foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) direct support organization of the Escambia County School District celebrating 30 years of investing in our children's future through scholarships, classroom Grants for Excellence and recognition of outstanding Escambia County teachers and student achievement. The mission of the Escambia County Public Schools Foundation is to enhance education in Escambia County by investing in our children's future to ensure they graduate on-time and are college or career ready. Since 1986, the Foundation has successfully raised over \$10 million dollars to enrich education. More information is available <http://ecpsfoundation.org/>.

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